

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION SINCE 1877

## Chick-fil-A founder passes away at 93



TRUETT CATHY

**ATLANTA (BP and local reports)** — S. Truett Cathy, founder and chairman emeritus of Chick-fil-A and a Southern Baptist layman unabashed by his Christianity, died Sept. 8, according to an announcement from the Atlanta-based restaurant chain. He was 93.

Cathy, who taught Sunday School for 13-year-old boys at First Church in Jonesboro, Ga., for over 50 years,

was known for his unyielding belief that Chick-fil-A restaurants should be closed on Sunday to honor his Christian faith and provide a Bible-based day of rest for employees.

He received a standing ovation as the keynote speaker at an annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, and was awarded an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree in 2006 by Bap-

tist-affiliated Blue Mountain College in Blue Mountain.

Beginning in 1946, Cathy built a tiny diner he owned in the Atlanta suburb of Hapeville into Chick-fil-A, which today has the highest same-store sales and is the nation's largest quick-service chicken restaurant chain based on annual system-wide sales. Chick-fil-A reached five billion dollars in

annual sales in 2013 and currently counts 1,800 restaurants in 40 states and Washington, D.C.

Cathy's oldest son, Dan, became president of Chick-fil-A in 2001; and chairman and chief executive officer in 2013, while Truett Cathy continued in the role of chairman emeritus until his death.

see CATHY on p. 11

## The ISIS threat



**PLEASE HELP** — Yazidi Kurdish immigrants rally at the White House in Washington, D.C., in early August to plead for American involvement in the growing crisis in northern Iraq. Terrorists there have declared a caliphate (Islamic political/religious state) and are slaughtering those who do not believe as they do, including Yazidis who follow an ancient religion based on Zoroastrianism. (BP photo courtesy of International Mission Board)

## Leaders declare 'just war' criteria met against group

**NASHVILLE (BP and local reports)** — With ISIS beheading a second American journalist and murdering Christians while controlling a large section of Iraq and Syria, analysts say military action against the terrorist group aligns with traditional just war principles.

That message comes on the heels of news reports earlier this week that U.S. President Barack Obama has ordered the

development of a long-term strategy to beat back the barbarous Al-Qaeda offshoot before it becomes even more powerful and deadly.

"Full application of just war principles does not only warrant airstrikes but a far more vigorous level of engagement as well," Daniel Heimbach, a Southern Baptist seminary professor who was instrumental in developing the just

war ethic for the 1991 Gulf War, told Baptist Press (BP) in written comments.

War with ISIS, the acronym for Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, has been discussed increasingly following ISIS videos showing the beheading of two American journalists: James Foley in an Aug. 19 video and Steve Sotloff on Sept. 2. ISIS has also reportedly tortured and murdered thousands of Christians, Muslims of other sects, and followers of other religions.

see ISIS on p. 9

## Judge: no misconduct found in Glorieta sale

**NASHVILLE (BP)** — A U.S. magistrate judge has recommended dismissal of all claims in a lawsuit filed a year ago to halt the sale of Glorieta Baptist Conference Center in New Mexico.

The lawsuit was filed by Kirk and Susie Tompkins of Little Rock, Ark., who were at the time leasing a lot at Glorieta. Their suit claimed that the 2,400-acre property located east of Santa Fe was not properly transferred and that leadership staff of LifeWay, the SBC Executive Committee, and Glorieta 2.0 were deceptive and fraudulent in the sale.

Federal magistrate judge Robert Hayes Scott, in a 79-page document for the U.S. Federal District Court in Albuquerque where the lawsuit was filed, found no evidence of misconduct in the Glorieta sale.

Scott, in his role as a magistrate for the federal court, disagreed with the couple's contentions in his recommendations to dismiss the Tompkins' lawsuit. "The transfer of Glorieta by LifeWay was not fraudulent... [Allegations of fraud and misconduct are baseless and have no foundation in the evidence.]

Scott also wrote that the Tompkins had "flung around vague accusations" of misconduct. The magistrate's filing states that Tompkins had "no legal interest" in the sale of the property and "has not suffered any harm" as a result of the sale. Scott recommended that all claims be dismissed "with prejudice," which means they should not be re-filed with any court.

The magistrate's recommendations could not be more



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## From the editor

WILLIAM PERKINS

## Keep fighting reality

An open letter from somewhere in the Great Beyond.

Greetings, my friends. I have another urgent word of advice for you. Listen closely.

For some time now, the abortion industry has become increasingly desperate as advancements in medicine and technology relentlessly push back the date at which human life in the womb can be indisputably recognized. I am gravely concerned.

The meaningless trimester system of human development, magically crafted out of thin air in 1973 by the witness U.S. Supreme Court as they threw out the Constitution in order to legalize abortion, was a real coup. It has long been the classroom laughingstock of medical schools around the country, but somehow has held up all these years. Brilliant. You are to be commended.

Undeterred abortion supporters still argue that the "fetus" isn't actually life, even though it has been pointed out that if the baby wasn't alive and growing, it wouldn't have to be killed. A barely-organized blob of tissue stuck to the side of a woman's uterus can't be considered "human," they continue to assert.

That is, until 3-D ultrasound and other remarkable advances in diagnostic medicine reveal a microscopic portion of the "blob" unmistakably contracting in the faintest of heartbeats, only a few weeks after conception. Other technological advances allow for the detection during gestation of brain waves, finger buds, gender, and eye color. Even an abortion can be viewed in real time, as it is inflicted on the unsuspecting child.

Now to my concerns. It is painfully obvious to me that as one pro-abortion argument after another is demolished by reality, the defeats have been so devastating that any other business model would have been discredited long ago. Not so with the abortion industry, much to my relief.

When the "blob" argument was quashed by reality, you switched to the argument that fetal tissues - a euphemism for baby parts - were needed for vital research into cures for a host of diseases. When that was disproved by reality you switched to the women's health argument, which seems to be holding up pretty well with the injection of that "war on women" political nonsense.

What a magnificent manipulation of language you have achieved, so much so that you have squelched nearly all public discourse on the issue of abortion. I could not have twisted the truth so eloquently even in my prime - and you know I was very accomplished in the art of mass rationalization.

Needless to say, I have always been a big advocate of discarding lives not worth living. Once a class of humans is dehumanized, as you are doing so successfully with unborn children, the sky is the limit. Those pesky "fetuses" have no voice, politicians aren't interested in them since they can't provide contributions, and they simply have no way to defend themselves. The elderly and the sick can't be far behind, can they?

Best of all, the public is always eager to avert their eyes from the slaughter, as long as you tickle their ears with empty promises of rising lifestyles and endless leisure. Trust me. They won't care as long as their bellies are filled, even as the ashes fall all around them.

You and your pro-abortion colleagues should heed my warnings because you're hanging by a thread, ideologically speaking. Hold fast to your intellectual dishonesty. It's pretty much all you have left, but the public will buy it anyway (see paragraph above).

Please don't fail me. America is my last hope to convince people that I was merely seventy years ahead of my time. Oh, to be alive in America today.

Your admiring Angel of Death,  
Dr. Josef Mengele

## Do we really want awakening?

Our Southern Baptist Convention president, Ronnie Floyd, has called us to pray for spiritual awakening. This call is the right one for a convention that exhibits marks of decline even as we seek to determine the best steps into the future.

The fact that our president must call us to pray for awakening says something about us, however. We do not readily recognize the need for an awakening, and our track record says we need to pray fervently for a mighty move of God.

As a long-time Southern Baptist who genuinely loves our denomination, here are my thoughts about why we don't passionately cry out for an awakening - and why we must. I trust you will hear these words as both confession and concern, as I count myself among the guilty.

■ We are "revivalistically" numb. We have heard this call before. Sometimes we do not hear what we need to hear because it sounds too familiar. On the other hand, the fact we are numb is only one more indicator of our need for revival.

■ We are biblically forgetful. Many of us forget (or perhaps do not even know) the stories of God moving mightily through His people in the Scriptures. When we do not remember the miraculous work of God in the Scriptures, we do not long for such movements in our lives.

■ We are historically uninformed. Most of us have read little about the great awakenings that swept our nation in the 1700s and 1800s. We do not know about crowds of thousands who gathered in public squares to hear the Gospel, about congregations that clung to pews under the power of God or about towns that spoke continually of spiritual matters.

Because we know so few stories of God's working in the past, we give little thought to a potentially extraordinary work of God in the present.

■ We are globally unaware. God is doing a mighty work around the world. Believers in South Asia, East Asia, and the Pacific Rim speak of non-believers turning to God in waves even though doing so may cost them their lives. The growth of the church in Cuba is staggering.

Many churches do not know these stories, though, and we thus lack a pas-



**Guest opinion**  
with Chuck Lawless

sionate desire for God to do the same on our shores.

■ We are comfortably worldly. Revival does not come without a cost. Foreign to us are brokenness over sin, confession of wrong, and gut-wrenching prayers of repentance that characterize movements of God. Pleading with God to send awakening might be asking for something we do not really want, if it means sacrifice and change.

■ We are denominational strong. This point may seem to contradict the beginning of this article, but that is intentional. Historically, the church has experienced awakening when a few believers get desperate for God - when they come to the end of themselves. I am not convinced the SBC is there yet, beginning with me. We have enough members and sufficient resources to make our slide into irrelevance almost imperceptible.

As long as the SBC is content simply being larger than others, we will not cry out for awakening.

So, what do we do? Confess our unwillingness to pray for awakening. Teach the Scriptures, reminding one another of God's miraculous work. Punctuate lessons and sermons with stories of God's moving in the past. Learn about and proclaim stories of God's work around the globe in the present. Repent of our idols, including our comfort. And pray. Fervently.

We simply must pray. I must pray. Apart from the power of God, we will not make a dent in the darkness of the world.

Lawless is vice president for graduate studies and ministry centers at Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C. This column first appeared in the Biblical Recorder online at [BRNow.org](http://BRNow.org), and appears here courtesy of Baptist Press. Edited for length and style.

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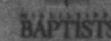
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# MPB nixes controversial abortion documentary

**WASHINGTON (BP and local reports)** — Officials at Mississippi Public Broadcasting (MPB) declined to air the Sept. 1 premiere of a documentary on late-term abortion doctors that had prompted concerns and criticisms, as well as allegations of outright bias, from pro-life advocates nationwide.

On Sept. 1, the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) telecast *After Tiller*, a 2013 movie about the only four remaining doctors who openly perform third-trimester abortions in the United States. The nearly 90-minute film is also available for viewing online at the PBS website, through Oct. 1.

Point of View (POV), the PBS program showing *After Tiller*, described the film as "a deeply humanizing and probing portrait" of the four in the wake of the 2009 shooting death of George Tiller, who had been America's best known, late-term abortion provider, at the hands of a crazed individual who believed he was saving unborn children.

Some pro-life organizations and individuals criticized the film as propaganda for abortion rights and called on PBS to cancel the premiere. Others urged PBS to add a pro-life documentary to provide balance.

"It was my decision alone not to do it," said Ronnie Agnew, executive director of MPB and former executive editor of the Clarion Ledger newspaper in Jackson, in an article by Andy Kopsa that was posted Sept. 2 on the Cosmopolitan magazine website ([cosmopolitan.com/politics/news/a30672/mississippi-public-broadcasting-after-tiller/](http://cosmopolitan.com/politics/news/a30672/mississippi-public-broadcasting-after-tiller/)).

"You know, it felt like here we are on a celebratory day, and it is too heavy," Agnew told Kopsa, adding that he felt the film would be "truly alarming" to some Mississippians.

Laurie Bertram Roberts of Jackson, president of the Mississippi chapter of the National Organization for Women, said in the Cosmopolitan article, "It's egregious that one man can censor this conversation."

"We don't talk about abortion in Mississippi except in very charged political ways," she told Kopsa. "After Tiller shows a very human side of the abortion conversation. It isn't a pro-choice or anti-choice thing. It is a humanizing thing, and Mississippians should have had the opportunity to make the choice to watch or not for themselves."

Roberts is a frequent escort for women entering the state's only abortion clinic, Jackson Women's Health Organization, located on State Street in Jackson. She has written extensively about her experiences with abortion and about granting permission for her 15-year-old daughter to have an abortion.

Southern Baptists were among those responding to the national controversy. Russell D.

"PBS claims to have 'humanized' these doctors with this documentary. Indeed, they are human. This documentary shows us once again that humanity is fallen, violent, and, apart from Christ, lost."

**Russell D. Moore**  
president of the  
Southern Baptist  
Ethics & Religious  
Liberty Commission

Moore, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) in Nashville, said *After Tiller* provides a reminder of the consequences of and solution for sin.

"PBS claims to have 'humanized' these doctors with this documentary," Moore said in a statement for Baptist Press. "Indeed, they are human. This documentary shows us once again that humanity is fallen, violent, and, apart from Christ, lost."

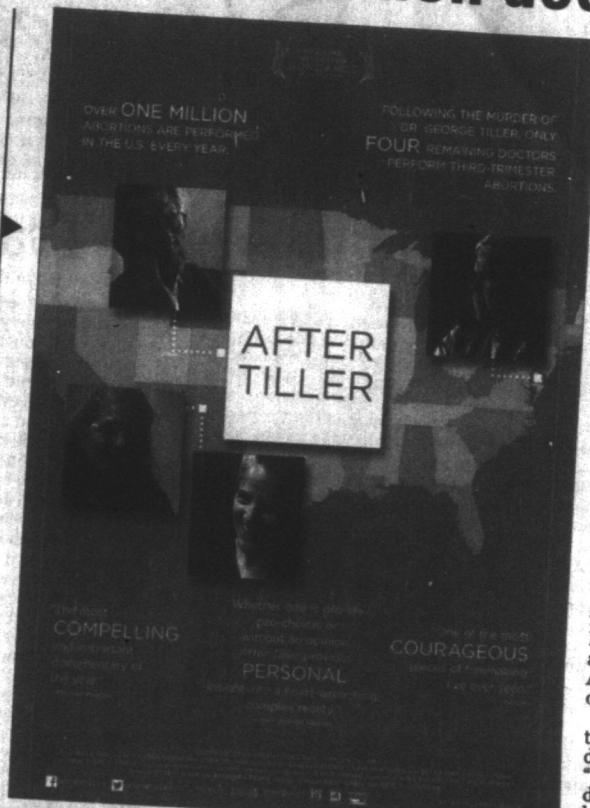
The movie "ought to remind us of what's at stake: innocent human lives and guilty human consciences," he said. "The Gospel addresses both; and so must we."

Skect Workman, a longtime Texas Southern Baptist and former ERLC trustee, expressed her objections after watching the PBS premiere on a local public TV station affiliated with Texas Tech University in Lubbock.

Workman shared her concerns in an email to Mickey Long, chairman of Texas Tech's board of regents. "It was a very bad film and made Dr. Tiller a 'hero' for his abortions," wrote Workman, a Tech graduate whose father and husband both have served on the school's board of regents. "It was so biased. The four remaining late term [abortion doctors] were also promoted throughout the film."

She and others appealed to the manager of Tech's public station in advance, Workman told Long. The manager approved the program for airing, which Workman described as an "unwise decision." Workman reported the manager later decided not to show the movie the other two times for which it was scheduled.

PBS ombudsman Michael Getler said early reports show the film aired in about 48% of the 50 major markets in the country, and about one-fourth of those stations showed it "later at



night, after primetime and after the time it was made available," Getler wrote.

In addition, no public stations telecast the program in 10 states, at least on Sept. 1, he said.

Getler said he has received more than 850 emails and phone calls about *After Tiller*, most in opposition.

In his lengthy analysis of the film and the reaction to it, Getler acknowledged it had a point of view. He called the focus on the doctors and their lives "a worthwhile public service undertaking involving a very rare look at a controversial and emotional, but legal, practice."

Getler said, however, the examination of the late-term abortion providers, "would have benefitted from at least a few minutes of calm, thoughtful exploration of the opposition view."

The airing of a film with a sympathetic perspective toward late-term abortion providers on a public television system that receives government funding is another controversy in the lengthy debate over a procedure legalized nationwide by the U.S. Supreme Court as part of its *Roe v. Wade* decision in 1973.

While most abortions are performed early in pregnancy, many observers credit the publicity surrounding one late-term abortion procedure with helping American public opinion move in a pro-life direction in recent years.

The method known as partial-birth abortion first came to public attention in the mid-1990s. Diagrams depicting the procedure appeared to sensitize many to the humanity of the unborn child. The ERLC and other pro-life organizations worked for years in support of a legislative ban on the procedure.

The federal government finally prohibited the procedure when U.S. President George W. Bush signed it into law in 2003 after two previous bills were vetoed by U.S. President Bill Clinton.

While the specific partial-birth method is forbidden, abortion providers now use other means to end the lives of unborn babies late in pregnancy.

The four doctors featured in *After Tiller* were colleagues of Tiller before he was killed by an anti-abortion extremist who now is serving a life sentence in prison for first-degree murder. The country's major pro-life organizations condemned Tiller's slaying, as did ERLC.

Tiller's abortion business in Wichita was a major reason Kansas was described at the time as "the late-term abortion capital of America." A number of abortion control measures were vetoed during that time by Governor Kathleen Sebelius, a Democrat, who went on to become U.S. President Barack Obama's Secretary of Health and Human Services and implemented the now-infamous

abortion/contraceptive mandate under Obamacare.

The doctors and the locations of the clinics where third-trimester abortions are performed are:

- LeRoy Carhart in Germantown, Md.
- Warren Hern in Boulder, Co.
- Susan Robinson in Albuquerque, N.M.
- Shelley Sella, in Albuquerque, N.M.

Carhart's abortion business especially has experienced medical emergencies in recent years. Eight such emergencies for women were reported in a 28-month period at Carhart's clinic, Operation Rescue reported in July.

One of those involved Jennifer Morbelli of New Rochelle, N.Y. Morbelli died in 2013 after Carhart began a lengthy procedure when her unborn daughter was reportedly 33 weeks into gestation.

PBS is missing the real story by telecasting *After Tiller*, said Kristi Burton Brown, a lawyer affiliated with both the Life Legal Defense Foundation and Alliance Defending Freedom, in an Aug. 28 blog post for the pro-life organization Live Action.

"[N]owhere in the film is the real 'work' of the abortion doctors shown," Brown wrote. "What is their 'work'? Well, the dead babies of course. The dead babies who sometimes come out in pieces, sometimes alive, but who nearly always — regardless of the inhumane method used — end up dead."

The film's co-directors and co-producers, Martha Shane and Lana Wilson, said they decided to frame the movie from the doctors' viewpoints.

"[O]ur goal was to give these doctors a voice," they said in a written statement.

The pair chose to portray the pro-life movement from the doctors' perspective "as a constant presence in the background, whether standing outside their clinics in protest, or lurking in the air as a potential threat," Shane and Wilson said.

One of the goals of the production team's outreach effort for the film, according to a fund-raising document, is to "[c]hange public perception of third-trimester abortion providers by building a movement dedicated to supporting their right to work with a special focus on maintaining their safety."

Among partners in that outreach effort are NARAL Pro-choice America and local Planned Parenthood chapters. The section of the PBS website that promotes the film contains a Lesson Plan with subtitles such as, "Consequences of Making Abortion Illegal," and "How Far Does the Right to Protest Go?"

The theatrical premiere of *After Tiller* was in January 2013 at the Sundance Film Festival in Utah — an event headed by noted liberal actor Robert Redford.

It was one of those hot Mississippi summer days. The temperature bounced around 100 and the heat index was way over that; the humidity at times was suffocating. The sun was about to go down and after a long day I thought it would be helpful if I went out on a bicycle ride before total darkness descended. I rode off into an area where I knew there was very little traffic, a lot of hills and valleys but no cars at that time of the day. I had been riding for about thirty minutes when way up ahead of me going up a hillside I saw some people pushing a car. My immediate thought was they had run out of gas or had a break down and that there were some people trying to help them push the car up the hill. I rode on in their direction and when I caught up with them, thinking I would offer my help, I slowed down enough and soon they stopped and it wasn't anything like I thought it was.

I wrongly assumed it would be a bunch of young guys trying to push the car up the hill, but it wasn't. It was six ladies, not teenagers but young women. It looked like all of them were about to drop from exhaustion and I asked them if I could help. They were so tired they couldn't speak, but they shook their heads and one of them gasping for air said, "He's making us push the car." I looked over and there was a man in the car who then climbed out and one of the ladies said, "And we pay him to make us do this." At that point the man said, "I'm a personal trainer." I said, "You have got to be kidding." No. Not far from them was his place, but this was one of the unique, tough workouts that he gave these obviously in shape and strong women.

The man who was providing steering for the car as the ladies pushed it up hill asked me if I would like to ride with him. I said, "No, I don't think so." Then he cracked the whip and said, "Alright, ladies, let's get moving," and they started pushing again to get to the top of the hill. I turned around and rode downhill shaking my head as I thought about



**Directions**  
With Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

## Our Personal Trainer

what I had just seen and heard and the incredible commitment and energy it takes to be out on an almost 100 degree day paying someone to push a car uphill so you could feel, look, and be better. Now in all fairness, the personal trainer who was looking like he was just loafing along sitting in the car. When he got out of the car, it was obvious he was in great physical shape and was, with a big smile and positive words, encouraging them to press forward, too.

It takes more than sitting in an easy chair sipping lemonade in the air conditioning to be in good physical condition or, may I add, in any other good condition either. I thought about how concerned Jesus was to make sure that we understood that he would not leave us alone, but that we would have a personal trainer in our spiritual lives, and our walk with him and our efforts to serve him would always be there and always give us his encouragement and guidance. In fact, just before he left, Jesus told his disciples that he would not leave them without help. The Spirit of God would be with them, the comforter, the encourager, the lifter-upper. In John 14:16-17 Jesus told them, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot re-

ceive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."

Our ever present personal trainer to walk with us sometimes takes us into experiences and events that we don't particularly want and maybe the weather's too hot; he is there. Think about it, the personal trainer with those ladies, and the one who comes alongside of us in our walk with Jesus, helps us. He encourages us to keep on when we want to quit. He helps us to move forward in the right direction when we could get in a ditch. He helps us to understand that we may not see it or enjoy it at the moment, what we're going through is ultimately best. He helps us.

But in addition I would point out he hurts us. I do not mean that he is mean to us or inflicts pain on us, but sometimes the things that he is leading us through can be so difficult, even painful, that we may wonder what good is this doing, but so often in all of life's journeys, and especially in our spiritual life, there are things that are touched with adversity and even affliction, struggle and grief, that God uses to bring about good in us. We may be stronger because of it. Our character may be better refined because of it. Our understanding of the needs of others may be sharpened. Clearly, God is not wanting to

hurt his children but he does want us to grow, expand, enlarge, be stronger, to face life and the work that he has set before us and sometimes it hurts.

Ultimately, what we may be going through leads us to the top of the hill to have new horizons in life. Though it may not be the last hill that you push ahead to get to the top, you come to see better and further than ever before, and then the Lord says "I've got another horizon I want to show you." Sometimes as we press forward in our walk with the Lord, the vision, the horizon he wants us to look at is not unlike the one he said to his disciples, "Behold, I say unto you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest" (John 4:35). That view of a lost world, that incredible horizon, helps us to see the nations and the people within those nations, dying without any sense of the understanding of the good news of the Gospel that Jesus loves them.

Sometimes the Lord tries to lead us to see new horizons, not way out there, but maybe within our own hearts. While it may be difficult to struggle with getting your arms around reaching a world for Christ, it may be equally difficult to get your arms around simply doing what God has called you to do, a new horizon in your own personal decision making. Though I've never had a personal trainer, I've known some folks who did, and I've known some folks who were trainers. They always seemed to be pushing folks beyond where they were. You can go faster. You can be stronger. You can do more repetitions. On and on there are no limits. Well, I can tell you for sure, you can spend a lifetime being guided by the Holy Spirit and you will never, ever reach the end of the road in the development that he is offering to you.

So with his help and even with his hurts, look to his horizon and keep on pushing. He's got new things for you just ahead.

The author can be contacted at directions@mbcb.org.

## College News



The WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY Caroline and Ray Bass Memorial Chapel, named for the late couple, was dedicated Aug. 27. Members of the Bass family attended the dedication service. Shown are Russell Torbett, Cassandra Bass Torbett, president Tommy King, and Mr. and Mrs. Houston Bass.

### In other College News:

The new School of Business building at William Carey University was dedicated on August 28. The building was completed in July and features state-of-the-art technology. Among the amenities in the building are a reception area, two lecture halls on the first floor and classrooms and a computer lab on the second floor, along with faculty and staff offices, study areas, a kitchen, lounges and conference rooms. Other features of the building include an expansive lobby with a grand staircase and an 8-foot European crystal chandelier in the lobby that was given to the university by a donor. The new building, which sits on Tuscan Avenue across from the WCU College of Osteopathic Medicine complex, opened on August 25, the first day of fall classes.

## BIBLIOCRYPTHE R

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CXZC HDMTDODCX JEC GXZMM HD

UZVJDU.

VZBW GTNCDDJ: GTNCDDJ

Clue: J = N

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Luke 2:49

By Charles Marx, 1932-2004, © 2005

# La. judge upholds state's same sex marriage ban

**NEW ORLEANS (BP)** — Traditional marriage finally gained a win in a U.S. District Court on Sept. 3, after a string of losses at the federal level.

U.S. District Judge Martin Feldman in New Orleans ruled that Louisiana's ban on same-sex marriage can stand. The decision by Feldman, an appointee of U.S. President Ronald Reagan, is the first time a ban in a state on same sex marriages has been upheld by a federal judge since the Supreme Court struck down key elements of the federal Defense of Marriage Act in 2013.

"The Court finds that Louisiana's definition of marriage as between one man and one woman and the limitation on recognition of same-sex marriages permitted by law in other states found in Article XII, Section 15 of the Louisiana Constitution and article 3520(B) of the Louisiana Civil Code do not infringe the guarantees of the Equal Protection and Due Process Clauses of the United States Constitution," Feldman wrote in his summary judgment.

The record reveals no material dispute: the defendants have shown that Louisiana's decision to neither permit nor recognize same-sex marriage, formed in the arena of the democratic process, is supported by a rational basis," Feldman wrote. "The Court further finds that plaintiffs have failed to establish a genuine dispute regarding a First Amendment violation on this record."

Shreveport attorney Mike Johnson and his legal team in June presented oral arguments in the federal court on behalf of the state, explaining why Louisiana's Defense of Marriage Amendment should be upheld.

Johnson, a member of First Church in Bossier City, La., who operates a legal ministry called Freedom Guard, successfully defended the amendment a decade ago against its original challenge at the state Supreme Court.

The day after Feldman's ruling, traditional marriage faced two more losses when the Seventh Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals in Chicago overturned same sex marriage bans in Indiana and Wisconsin. Courts have ruled in favor of same-sex marriage more than three dozen times in the last 14 months.

At the state level, the reasoning used by a circuit judge in Tennessee was hailed by traditional marriage proponents in an Aug. 5 ruling for the state's marriage statute.

In a 2004 Louisiana ballot, 78% of voters approved Louisiana's Defense of Marriage Constitutional Amendment. Along with Mississippi, Louisiana is one of 31 states that has chosen not to recognize same sex marriage.

"The decision today is precisely correct," Johnson said after Feldman's ruling. "The court has merely affirmed that it is the people of each state who have the authority to define and regulate marriage within their borders, rather than a handful of unelected federal judges. We believe the U.S. Supreme Court will ultimately uphold this important principle." Steve Horn, president of the Louisiana Baptist Convention and pastor of First Church in Lafayette, voiced gratitude for the ruling, "but we need to be careful as to how we celebrate. We still have a lot of ground to recover regarding the sanctity of all marriages."

Regarding same sex-marriage, this is really not a very difficult question once we decide that we are going to be people who believe and follow the Bible," Horn said. "However, as believers in Christ and in God's Word, we must admit that we have an unbiblical view of marriage on many other fronts.

"Adulterous relationships and cohabitation before marriage are also violations of keeping marriage pure and holy. Whereas these issues will not receive the same attention in the political and legal arenas of our culture, they must receive equal attention from our pulpits."

Among gay marriage supporters voicing disappointment in Wednesday's ruling, Mary Griggs, chairwoman of Forum for Equality Louisiana, told the Associated Press, "Every citizen of the United States deserves protection of their rights, uphill climb or not."

Despite the ruling in favor of traditional marriage, the victory could be short-lived if the decision is reversed in the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals which already has an appeal before it by the state of Texas stemming from a federal judge's ruling in February against Texas ban on gay marriage.

Johnson believes the decision will stand. "We are very confident that the federal 5th Circuit will uphold the district court's well-reasoned opinion," he said. "This is ultimately a states' rights issue, and Judge Feldman got it precisely right."



**TEMPORARILY SAFE** — Amid the woes brought on by radical ISIS Islamist extremists, a displaced Iraqi woman from one of the country's religious minorities watches over several refugee children as they nap in a barren apartment in an undisclosed area of northern Iraq. (BP photo courtesy of Baptist Global Relief)

## So. Baptists providing food, provisions to Iraqi refugees

**NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)** — Life-saving relief supplies are being delivered to Iraqi Christians and other minorities forcibly displaced in northern Iraq by radical ISIS Islamists.

Many of the families have gone for three weeks with little to eat, said Abraham (not his real name), who leads work in the Middle East for Baptist Global Response (BGR). He reports these persecuted Christians believe they are facing extinction, and he worries that Christians in the West do not know of their suffering.

"We entered this one camp, and they said, 'So far we are just eating rice and some watery tomato soup. We have only had meat once. A guy came and he gave us some chicken. Just for a day,'" Abraham said.

"It touched my heart, to know we could provide some good healthy nutrition for these people," he added. "It brought joy to their hearts for us to bring beans and other food. Just to make them feel they are normal and loved."

Many of the families were urban professionals who ran businesses and owned homes. When violence reached their majority-Christian neighborhood, however, they had only minutes to flee. An estimated 60,000 people left in the space of a few hours, most with only the clothes on their backs.

Several families pooled their resources and managed to rent an apartment, Abraham said.

Eight families shared two floors of an unfinished house.

"We entered this place, and it's totally empty. It's just a floor and concrete walls," he said. "To look at these children, to look in the eyes of a defeated father who cannot provide for his family, the least we could do was we bought carpet so it can be a little more comfortable for them than sleeping on the floor. Pillows. Blankets. Basic things."

Baptist Global Response has been providing relief to refugees and displaced families throughout the Middle East for years now, Abraham said, but the ISIS advance across northern Iraq has compounded one crisis with another.

"That makes it more tragic, in a sense, but at the same time it helps us because we already have work, we already have projects on the ground, to pool our efforts together, to pool our teams together," he said. "Now some of our national team members are forcibly displaced themselves, becoming victims of the crisis as well."

BGR is drawing on resources provided by Global Hunger Relief (GHR) to provide food, water, baby formula, propane burners, and temporary shelter. They also have been helping families obtain cooling units to provide relief from scorching summer heat.

"The heat is suffocating. The temperature is in the hundreds and it's a dusty environment. So you can see a baby, 25 days old,

they cannot endure this," Abraham said, "so we try to have a water cooling system to help them in their own tent."

Although their Christian community is one of the most ancient in the world, these families are wondering what will happen to them, Abraham said. "I promised I would make their story known, that people would know these Christians exist, they are part of this land, they are an ancient people."

"To them this is the birthplace of Christianity. They fear they are at the point of extinction. They say, 'Don't forget all about us.'"

Crucial resources for the relief effort are coming from GHR, the Southern Baptist channel for giving to hunger needs across North America and around the world. Donations to GHR will be emphasized when many Southern Baptist churches observe World Hunger Sunday on Oct. 12.

"Global Hunger Relief helps us tremendously," Abraham said. "I encourage churches and whoever is listening to us to give to Global Hunger Relief because without it we will not be able to help a lot of these people. We need to advocate, we need to pray, but we also need to be generous."

"This kind of thing is not much sacrifice on our part. I hope we will stand as an advocate, as caring Southern Baptists, to meet the needs of these people, giving a cup of water in the name of Jesus. That's what it is all about."

For more information, visit [globalhungerrelief.com](http://globalhungerrelief.com).

## Just for the Record



**CALVARY CHURCH, BOGUE CHITTO**, recently ordained four new deacons. Shown are Greg Allen, Brad Martin, pastor Hal Hatten, Scott Reeves, and Jason Leggett.



**YOUTH FROM FAIR RIVER CHURCH, BROOKHAVEN**, attended Youth Night at the Coliseum in Jackson. Shown are the participants with youth pastor Tim Johnson. Jay Anderson, pastor.

**OLD UNION CHURCH, BELMONT,** honored Laverne H. Cain Aug. 31 upon her retirement as pianist for 66 years. Pastor Jerry Ginn presented her with a plaque, a "piano" music box, and a cake.



**TOOMSOOBA CHURCH, LAUDERDALE ASSOCIATION**, recently presented adopted BSU summer missionary Adam Clark its 2014 VBS offering. Clark is a student at Meridian Community College. Shown are pastor J. David Caves, VBS director Kelly Johnson, and Clark with his gift of \$250.



**ROUNDAWAY CHURCH, DODDSVILLE**, held a men's bake-off Aug. 24. Shown are the participants.



**FIRST CHURCH, OLOH**, ordained Stephen Sylvest, West White, and Vince Welch as deacons. Shown are pastor John Inabnit, Sylvest, White, Welch, and associate pastor Andy Baker.



**PHILADELPHIA CHURCH, CASEYVILLE**, had a dedication of their Ten Commandments rock garden in August in memory of Fred Warren, Jr. Shown are Ray Warren, Daisy Warren, Freda Warren, and Jennie Strait.



**PINEVIEW CHURCH, LAUREL**, held a baptism May 4. Shown, front row, are Madison Tidwell, Bralynn Bolan, Elise Smith, Colton Walters, and Seth Boutwell; back row, pastor Tim Nelson, Amber Thompson, Bailey Walters, Skylar Smith, and Leah Walters.

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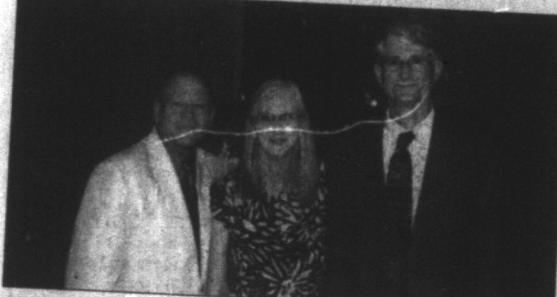
## Just for the Record



**HARRISVILLE CHURCH, HARRISVILLE**, held a groundbreaking ceremony July 20 for their new education and office building. Shown are Eric Dear, David Sartin, Troy Griffin, Lisa Sartin, Crystal Dedmon, Carl Parker, James Harris, J.P. Dear, and Wayne Harris.



**FAIR RIVER CHURCH, BROOKHAVEN**, recently honored 2014 Bible drillers Jared Anderson, Paul Nations, Jerrod Nations, and Savannah Anderson. Jay Anderson, pastor.



**GRACE CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA**, ordained Danny Guthans as deacon. Shown are pastor Chester Carlisle, Becky Guthans, and Guthans.

### In other Church News:

► **Carrollton Church, Carrollton**, is hosting its annual women's conference, Life Isn't Always Butterflies and Rainbows, Sept. 13, 8:30 a.m. - 2 p.m. Cost, \$15, includes lunch and breakfast snacks. Kimberly Cox, speaker. For more information and reservations, call (662) 237-0326.

► **Central Church, McComb**, will be ordaining Tom Gonsalves to the gospel ministry Sept. 14. He has served the church as youth director and deacon for the past five years.

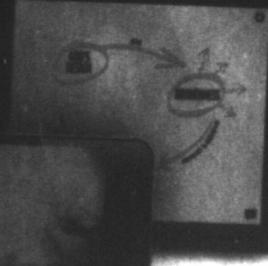


**Macedonia Church, Lee Association**, ordained Jerry Smith and Steve Cook as deacons June 8. Shown are Sherry Smith, Smith, pastor Terry Faulkner, Cook, and Maria Cook.

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# First Person: Beware newest take on prosperity theology

By R. Albert Mohler Jr.  
Correspondent

The evangelical world, joined by no shortage of secular observers, has been abuzz about the latest soundbite of note from the Pastors Osteen — this time offered by Victoria Osteen as her husband Joel beamed in the background.

In her message, Victoria Osteen tells their massive congregation to realize that their devotion to God is not really about God, but about themselves. "I just want to encourage every one of us to realize when we obey God, we're not doing it for God. I mean, that's one way to look at it. We're doing it for ourselves, because God takes pleasure when we are happy... That's the thing that gives Him the greatest joy..."

She continued: "So, I want you to know this morning. Just do

good for your own self. Do good because God wants you to be happy... When you come to church, when you worship Him, you're not doing it for God really. You're doing it for yourself, because that's what makes God happy. Amen?"

Judged in theological terms, the Osteen message is the latest and slickest version of prosperity theology. Prosperity theology, promising that God rewards faith with health and wealth, first appealed to those described as "the dispossessed" — the very poor. Now, its updated version appeals to the aspirational class of the suburbs.

There is nothing really new in this message. The problem with prosperity theology is not that it promises too much, but that it aims for so little. What God

promises us in Christ is far above anything that can be measured in earthly wealth — and believers are not promised earthly wealth nor the gift of health.

In their sermons, writings, and media appearances, the Osteens insist that God is well-disposed to all people and He wills that all flourish, but there is virtually no mention of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. No reference to sin as the fundamental issue. No explanation of atonement and resurrection as God's saving acts. No clarity of any sort on the need for faith in Christ and repentance of sin.

Instead, they focus on happiness and God's "immeasurable favor" to be poured out on all people, if they will only correct their thinking.

Prosperity theology certainly



MOHLER

sells books and draws crowds in the United States, but what does it possibly say to a grieving Christian wife and mother in Iraq? How can it possibly be squared with the actual message of the New Testament? How can any sinner be saved without a clear presentation of sin, redemption, the cross, the empty tomb, and the call to faith and repentance? Prosperity theology fails every test, and fails every test miserably.

It is a false gospel and one that must be repudiated, not merely reformed.

God's pleasure in His human creatures centers in His desire and will that they come to faith in Jesus Christ and be saved. The great dividing line in humanity is not between the rich and the poor, the sick and the well, or even the happy and the unhappy. The great divide is between those who, in Christ, have been transferred from

the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's glorious light.

Mere happiness cannot bear the weight of the Gospel. The message of the real Gospel is found in John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

That is a message that can be preached with a straight face, a courageous spirit, and an urgent heart in Munich, in Miami, or in Mosul. If our message cannot be preached with credibility in Mosul, it should not be preached in Houston.

That is the Osteen Predicament.

*Mohler is president of Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky. This column first appeared at his website, AlbertMohler.com, and appears here courtesy of Baptist Press. Edited for length and style.*

## Revivals & Homecomings



**SPRINGFIELD CHURCH, MORTON**, had the "Sons of Springfield" lead in revival services this year. Six ministers who had their start in the church spoke. Shown are Michael Winstead, Bob Smith, Steven Wade, Scotty Cooper, Kevin Cooper, and Tal Vardaman.

speaker; Johnny Smith, music; Ray Simmons, interim pastor.

**Twin Lakes Church, Madison**: 35th anniversary, Sept. 14; services, 10:30 a.m., followed by dinner on the grounds; Ivan Parke and Bill Stanford, speakers.

**Bluff Springs Church, Pike County**: 124th homecoming, Sept. 14; services, 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch; Victor Walsh,

## Truth is not relative.

Find it in the One who is the way, truth, and life.

Simply share the following prayer with God

in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12) If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Southern Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

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## Submission Guidelines

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published.

Preferred method: news may be submitted electronically to the e-mail address below, and must be included in the message segment of an e-mail form. Secondary method: news may be typewritten or neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper and mailed. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone. Due to ever-present virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments in JPEG format are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs must be submitted electronically via e-mail, as attachments in JPEG format. Hard copy photographs mailed through the postal service will not be accepted. Photographs must be clear, sharp, and well-lit. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. Photographs containing inappropriate gestures and objectionable clothing will not be published. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items that do not reproduce well on newsprint are generally not publishable.

There is no guarantee that news items and/or photographs will be published, and unsolicited material will not be acknowledged or returned. All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date. Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. These guidelines are not meant to be exhaustive.

Submit news to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530, FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

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GRIFFITH MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH, LOCATED AT 5275 TERRY ROAD IN SOUTH JACKSON, IS CURRENTLY LOOKING FOR A FULL TIME MINISTRY ASSISTANT/SECRETARY. For the job description and more information, go to [www.griffithmemorial.com](http://www.griffithmemorial.com) and click on the job information link.

STAR BAPTIST CHURCH, RANKIN COUNTY, IS SEEKING A PART TIME INTERIM CHILDREN'S MINISTER. He/She will work 25 hours per week with preschool - 6th grades. Duties include: planning, coordinating, training and implementation of children's activities, working closely with committees. See [www.starbaptistchurch.org](http://www.starbaptistchurch.org) or call 601-845-2736 for details.

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## ISIS

cont. from p. 1

The U.S. has launched airstrikes against ISIS in Iraq and is considering similar action in Syria. With the air cover provided by the Americans, local fighters including Kurds and the Iraqi army have been able to push back the terrorists in some areas.

Douglas Carver, executive director of chaplaincy at the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board in suburban Atlanta, agreed with Heimbach that there is just cause to wage war against ISIS.

Carver, former U.S. Army chief of chaplains who advised commanders and soldiers on the ethics of warfare as a chaplain, told BP that America has "a just reason and right to restore order to the chaos in the world."

Eliminating this "evil cancer that seems to be growing" would serve a just cause, Carver said, referencing one of the principles of just war theory.

"We have now had two of our journalists that have been beheaded. We have unrest and fear in southwest Asia like never before," Carver said. "We have a lack of respect for humanity of all genders and all ages. We have this plague of terrorism that intends to destroy what we understand as a way of life."

Traditionally, Judeo-Christian societies have deemed a war "just" if it satisfies a list of criteria drawn from the Bible and classical Greek and Roman tradition. Carver and Heimbach agreed that a war with ISIS would satisfy those criteria. Among the just war principles that a nation must consider before going to war:

■ **Just cause.** There must be a specific act of injustice to be corrected.

■ **Competent authority.** The decision to wage war should only be made by the person or governing body responsible for maintaining a nation's civil order and security.

■ **Right intention.** The intended result of going to war must be to restore a previous state of peace and civil order.

■ **Last resort.** All realistic, nonviolent alternatives must be exhausted before going to war.

■ **Probability of success.** There must be a realistic hope of achieving victory.

■ **Proportionality of projected results.** The good expected upon attaining victory must be greater than estimates of what it will cost to achieve victory.

Once a nation goes to war, just war theory demands that additional principles be followed amid the fighting to protect human dignity and minimize loss of life. Among those principles:

■ **Proportionality in the use of force.** Force in war must be limited to what is re-

"Whether we go to war with ISIS or not, we need at least to pray, and we also know in faith that God is going to be glorified because He's King over all the nations. With all the anxiety of whether we should go to war or not, maybe God is using this to turn us back to Him."

Douglas Carver

executive director of chaplaincy at the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board

quired to attain legitimate military goals.

■ **Discrimination.** Soldiers must distinguish between combatants and non-combatants and not seek to destroy non-combatants or their property.

■ **Right spirit.** Soldiers should always regret using deadly force to harm people and property. They should love their enemies even while fighting.

Baptist Press has addressed just war principles previously surrounding the war on terror in Iraq and Afghanistan, the 1999 U.S. bombings to stop ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, and the 1991 Persian Gulf War.

In the present conflict, "the just cause principle is most clearly met in defending the established governments of Iraq, Syria, and other nations threatened by the ISIS onslaught," said Heimbach, senior professor of Christian ethics at Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., who was an adviser to U.S. President George H.W. Bush in developing the just war ethic for the 1991 Gulf War.

The competent authority principle is met when the recognized leaders of those nations appeal to us for help and that help is authorized by the Congress of the United States (not the President acting alone), Heimbach said in his written comments.

The probability of success and value of ultimate victory will help determine how much force the U.S. should employ against ISIS, Heimbach said.

"The reality we must ignore is how responding to ISIS with too little will make matters a lot worse, and responding to ISIS too late will make success less likely and a lot more costly," he said.

More extensive military operations than airstrikes alone probably will be required to stop what Heimbach described as the "tyrannical aggression" of ISIS. While the U.S. should not unnecessarily target people and destroy personal property, it should use "every bit of force necessary" to "remove ISIS as a destabilizing force in the world."

Carver cautioned against rushing to judgment against



CARVER



HEIMBACH

Obama and other politicians who seem to be "dragging their feet" regarding war. A war is only just if waged as a last resort after employing the nation's economic, political, and diplomatic power in an attempt to secure peace, he said.

Carver expressed concern that amid "cultural secularization," some elected and appointed American policy makers have insufficient grounding in the Judeo-Christian tradition to understand and apply just war theory.

Much of just war theory is drawn from the Old Testament, although Scripture does not use the phrase, "just war." Propponents of just war theory point to Abraham's use of just war principles to rescue Lot in Genesis 14, God's requirement that Israel fight pagan nations in humane ways in Deuteronomy 20, and God's condemnation of Israel's enemies for waging war in brutal and barbaric ways in Amos 1.

Because just war theory is being dropped from some military training programs, churches have a duty to discipline soldiers and policy makers in Scripture's teachings about the ethics of war, Carver said.

In 2011, Baptist Press reported that an ethics class on just war theory at the U.S. Air Force Academy was halted because complaints were raised about Scripture being used in teaching materials.

"We have secularized the discussion on the just war theory," which is traditionally regarded as an important element in the theology and philosophy of great Christians like Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, Carver said.

In the end, prayer is the most powerful weapon for believers concerned that America is losing its ethical moorings, Carver pointed out.

"Whether we go to war with ISIS or not, we need at least to pray," Carver said, "and we also know in faith that God is going to be glorified because He's King over all the nations. With all the anxiety of whether we should go to war or not, maybe God is using this to turn us back to Him."

# THE VILLAGE VIEW



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## GIFTS OF HONOR AND MEMORY

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful, and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

### MAY 2014

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Turkey Creek BC  
Ray & Estie V. Dunnam  
Ms. Paula R. Dunnam  
Earline Egger  
Mrs. Ann B. Hayes  
Mrs. Mildred Elder  
Mr. & Mrs. Stanley Downs  
Douglas Farr  
Mr. & Mrs. Billy R. Havard

Mr. & Mrs. Jennings Dixon  
Mr. Joe Combs  
Mrs. Bobbie Foster  
I L Foster SSC, Prentiss BC  
Jeanette Freeman  
Mr. & Mrs. James C. Steele  
Jeanette Freeman  
Mr. & Mrs. Louis Flaccomo  
Sudie & Billy French  
Mr. & Mrs. Benny G. French  
Mr. Sam Fryant  
Mr. & Mrs. James C. Papizan  
Mr. Charles Gastrell  
Mr. & Mrs. Horace W. Newman  
B. P. Gates  
Mr. & Mrs. Ray Wilkie  
Joan Gibson  
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Benson  
Betty Jean Gilbert  
Mrs. Linda Perkins  
Dorothy Gilbert  
Mrs. Theresa F. Johnston  
Mike Green  
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel A. Smith  
& Alissa  
Glynn Grubbs  
Faithful Workers SSC,  
Salem BC  
Wanda Haas  
Turkey Creek BC  
Mrs. Annie Hall  
Mr. & Mrs. James E. Dixon  
Hugh Harrell  
Mr. & Mrs. Anthony DeLee  
Mrs. Joy Harris  
Dr. & Mrs. Bob Hanvey  
Joy Harris  
Dr. & Mrs. Randy Hankins  
Mike Harris  
Central BC  
George Lee Harrison  
Mr. Jeffrey Mark Scobey  
Thomas Hatchcock  
Mr. & Mrs. James E. Dixon  
Mrs. O'Dean Helms  
Mrs. Margaret M. Davis  
Mrs. June P. House  
Elaine Herring  
Mr. W. B. Herring  
Rev. John Hilburn  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Sullivan  
Pauline Holland  
Mr. & Mrs. Glen E. King  
Frank Hudgins  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Hudgins  
Mr. Dennis Hudson  
Marjorie Hudson  
Dean Huntley Sr.  
Patricia Triplett  
Annie Pearl Triplett  
Grace Hutchens  
Mr. & Mrs. Lester Herrington  
Margaret Ivy  
Mrs. Edith M. Aldridge  
Mr. Donald James  
Mr. & Mrs. David White  
Mrs. Ernestine James  
Ms. Ruby Jones  
Willetta Jewell  
Bonnie McGee Jewell  
Danny Jewell  
Jo Johnson  
Gary & Sue Fulton  
Mother of Lee Jones  
Lee Jones  
Peggy Jones  
Mr. & Mrs. Lanny Lancaster  
Jackie Keller  
Daniel, Dianne & Alissa Smith  
Mary Kennedy  
Ms. Sylivia Fortenberry  
Gordon Kenwright  
Mr. & Mrs. Ron Bennett  
Peyton Hayes Ladner  
Ruth SSC, Juniper Grove BC  
Rebekah Lay  
Morton Elementary School  
Mrs. Judy Thompson Lea  
Charlotte Farthing  
Emma & Wayne Tillman  
Edna & Andy Bounds  
Ken & Dorothy Walker  
Mr. Joe B. Manton

Imogene Robbins  
Cedelle Saulters  
Jeanette Mars  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Davis  
Mrs. Faye Martin  
Mr. & Mrs. John B. Tilson  
Mrs. Bobbie H. Hankins  
James "Jim" Mason  
Mr. & Mrs. Ray Wilkie  
Mr. & Mrs. Ernest L. Scruggs  
Dell Mayfield  
Mrs. Nancy H. Rives & Family  
Dr. John G. McCall  
Mr. & Mrs. Edward E. Smith  
Mr. & Mrs. Horace W. Newman  
Jesse McCullough  
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel A. Smith  
& Alissa  
Catherine Ann Abel McDowell  
Mr. Robert T. Jeffries  
Louise McGee  
Bonnie McGee Jewell  
Danny Jewell  
Otis McGee  
Mrs. Glenda C. Fry  
John Patrick McIntyre  
Mrs. Gloria McAlpin  
Braxton McKinley  
Mr. & Mrs. Glen D. Fortenberry  
Addine McWilliams  
Mrs. Mary K. McWilliams & Family  
Frank Montgomery

Mr. & Mrs. Delbert L. Edwards  
Mrs. Helen Moore  
Mr. & Mrs. Ernest L. Scruggs  
Mr. & Mrs. Ray Wilkie  
Bo Morgan  
Providence BC Members  
Charles R. Morgan  
Ms. Jean Ferguson  
Mrs. Blanche Murff  
Mrs. Jo Ann R. Stoner  
Alvin M. Newell  
Jane, Vic & Irene Gatz  
Mrs. Carolyn A. Richmond  
Mrs. Sue Hamilton  
Mr. Horace Newman  
Mr. & Mrs. Charlie Morgan  
Mr. & Mrs. Clifton Porter  
Mr. & Mrs. J. W. Whitten, Jr.  
Valley Park BC  
Charles Newton  
Cecil & Penny Washington  
Mrs. Frankie H. Jenkins  
Mrs. Inez T. McCain  
Peggy Newton  
Mr. & Mrs. Glen E. King  
Carolyn Stokes Nicholson  
Mrs. Theresa H. Spears  
Ms. Regina Gail Sledge  
Roy Norquist  
Mrs. Inez T. McCain  
Bonnie Oliver  
Cecil & Penny Washington  
Mr. Bobby Oswalt  
Mr. & Mrs. James C. Papizan  
Charles Overall

Mr. & Mrs. Wayne R. Hall  
Mrs. Neva F. Palmer  
Mr. & Mrs. Clifford E. Trussell  
J. V. Parker  
Mr. Michael W. Parker  
Kimberly Parker  
Mr. & Mrs. F. R. Clark  
Mary Katherine Parker  
Mr. Michael W. Parker  
Vivian Partridge  
Mr. & Mrs. Larry P. Franklin  
Jim Patterson  
Mr. & Mrs. James H. Ellis  
Ann Perkins  
Turkey Creek BC  
Pep Pettit  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Hudgins  
Charles (Bubba) Pittman Sr.  
Bradford Chapel BC  
Mrs. Pounders  
Mrs. Dot G. Griffin  
Irene Pounders  
Kolola Springs BC  
Ella Rea Powell  
Mr. & Mrs. J. W. Powell  
Milton Prescott  
Mrs. Glenda C. Fry  
Renee Purvis  
Mr. & Mrs. Mike Domino  
Mr. Don Raby  
Ruth SSC, Juniper Grove BC  
Mrs. Mildred Redding  
Mr. & Mrs. Bobby R. Redding  
Inez Reed  
Mr. & Mrs. Ron Bennett

## SAVE the DATE

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2014

The Baptist Children's Village is participating in the first ever Mississippi Gives Day. It is a one day event where Mississippians are encouraged to give online to their favorite charity, but you don't have to wait until December to participate. We ask that you visit [www.mississippigives.org](http://www.mississippigives.org) today and give or set-up your own fundraising page to help raise money that will give Mississippi children help and hope through the love of Jesus. Call Chrystelle Thamas, BCV Public Relations Director at 662-922-2422 or email her at [cthomas@baptistchildrensvillage.com](mailto:cthomas@baptistchildrensvillage.com) for more information. We can do this together!

## BCV EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

### Immediate Openings for Case Managers (Statewide)

The BCV has immediate openings for individuals to fill the position of Case Manager on several of its campuses across the state. The individual filling these positions must be mature, Christian adults, with personal integrity, Christian character and sound reputation. These individuals must have a demonstrated commitment to the ethical standards incumbent upon each staff member of the BCV staff and an appreciation of the confidentiality extended to children and families served by the BCV. Successful candidates for this position must have a demonstrated ability to cultivate adaptive relationships with both children and adults. These individuals must also have the ability to effectively communicate, through both written and spoken language, exhibit sound clinical judgment, tact and assertiveness, and be able to work effectively with residents, their families, referral sources and BCV staff. As this position requires a great deal of direct contact with residents and their families, successful candidates for this position must have a relatively flexible schedule and be able to work at those times when the residents are on campus or when their families may be available.

Individuals seeking this position must have a master's degree in a social or behavioral science field. An individual with a bachelor's degree in a social or behavioral science field and extensive case management experience in the field of residential or mental health care may be considered.

To be considered for this position, you will need to complete the full employment application which includes a statement of faith and submit it along with a copy of your resume to Dr. Randy Cotton, Director of Programs and Clinical Services at [rcotton@baptistchildrensvillage.com](mailto:rcotton@baptistchildrensvillage.com) or 114 Marketridge Drive, Ridgeland, MS 39157.

## Pay Attention • Hebrews 2:1-4

Apathy is one of the most dangerous attitudes for professing Christians to have. Not only is it insidious in our own lives, but those that have drifted away into apathy can inadvertently pass it on to others, becoming a generational problem if left unchecked. In today's church apathy is alive and well. May God's Holy Spirit use the words of Hebrews to break us away from the apathy and laziness that overtakes us back to being on fire for the kingdom of God!

**Listen! (Vs. 1)** We must pay the most careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away. The apostle Paul said in Romans 10:17, "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the Word of Christ." We need to listen to the Word of God like our lives depend on it...because it does. God is not giving us some form of speculative suggestion. He is giving us Words of life that must be heard, believed and obeyed repeatedly. These passages serve to demonstrate that the teaching of this epistle is not merely theoretical and unrelated to the realities of life, but is intensely practical and therefore full of intense seriousness...as Spicq says, "saving truth is not just speculative, it governs the whole of life." (Hebrews, Hughes, 72). We must pay careful attention, so that we do not drift away.

To spurn the hearing of the gospel is

to disregard not only the preacher but also God who is the source of the saving message. In the speaking of God to us by the Son, the Word becomes flesh, word and action are perfectly united; and for the believer, who responds with faith and gratitude, this Word is not just a declaration heard with the outward ear, but an energy experienced in the very depth of his being, powerful in the transformation of his existence, and visible

in his daily conduct." (Hebrews, Hughes, 72)

The reality of drifting is one that we are faced with on a daily basis. It

happens little by little day by day and before we realize it we have not prayed, read our Bible, attended church, shared our faith, given of our finances to the church, nothing. We have drifted away.

People are responsible for the truth that has been told to them. To ignore Jesus is comparable to the sailor who ignores the buoys and other warnings.

**The Peril of Neglect (Vs. 2-3a)**

"For since the message spoken through angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment,<sup>3</sup> how shall we escape if we ignore so great a salvation?" Hebrews is making a comparison between the greatness of the Law as compared to the greatness of the gospel in these verses for maximum impact on the reader.

If the Law of Moses was binding, meaning that once it was established, Israel was held accountable for every word of its content, how much more binding and accountable are we to the Lord Jesus for the great salvation that he brought us? "If as the history of Israel shows, neglect of the law produced dire consequences, neglect of the gospel must inevitably be disastrous. If the breakers of the law did not go unpunished, certainly the disposer of the gospel cannot expect to do so." (Hebrews, Hughes, 73). The Law specified the consequences for

disobedience. Ignoring the Christ carries even greater consequences.

**Truth Verified (3b-4)** This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. "God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will." The writer now explains the evidence by which he knows what he has said to be true. God placed his mark on this great salvation provided through Christ in three ways. First, Christ announced the salvation he would bring personally through his own mouth, then, secondly, his words were recorded by those who heard him (apostles) and finally, through the manifestations of the outpouring of God's Spirit through Christ in signs, wonders, miracles and spiritual gifts given to the church (Eph. 4, 1 Cor 12). God delivered the gospel and confirmed the message with various miracles. The Holy Spirit also testifies to the validity of the gospel message.

It's true...listen...don't neglect...dig in and stay in! Don't drift from such a great salvation!

*Hazzard is pastor of Woodland Church, Columbus.*



Explore the Bible  
with Shelby Hazzard

## Connected in Unity • Ephesians 4:1-6

Lemierre's syndrome. We'd never heard of it. After taking Rae, our nine-year-old granddaughter, to several medical professionals without any answers, and seeing her worsen by the day, we finally got a diagnosis for this rare, strep-based disease. A harrowing journey involving six weeks in a specialty hospital nearby commenced. Family members teamed with medical experts from various disciplines to fight this infectious nemesis.

As long days and nights turned into weeks, we saw unity at its best. The medical team ordered tests, checked Rae's vitals, read reports, did research, and talked to family members, trying to make the wisest assessments and initiate the safest procedures. And those involved didn't always agree. However, when push came to shove, unified decisions were required for treatment to continue. Rae is now much improved, and we rejoice in all who imparted their skill and care for this positive outcome.

In a similar manner, church members are a team with a common goal. It can be encapsulated into two words: "make disciples" (Matthew 28:19 NIV). To be true followers of Jesus, all the programs, plans and projects undertaken by the local church must move toward and culminate in obedience to this command. Unity is required for that to happen. As we consider this week's theme – to be connected in unity – we real-

ize the hard truth: although unity is a given, staying unified requires diligent effort.

So what are some spiritual traits that promote unity? Paul tells the Ephesians to live (some translations say "walk") worthy of their calling (Eph. 4:1). We've been chosen and adopted as children of the King of kings...what more worthy calling is there? But the next two verses say this high privilege calls for a certain manner of life, requiring diligent effort. We're to show an abundance ("completely"; vs 2) of humility, gentleness,

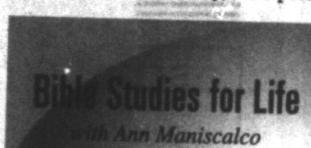
patience and love to fellow believers. Verse three continues the emphasis; we're to "make every effort" to maintain unity. The Holy Spirit provides the empowerment, and peace is the bonding agent.

Paul further drives home the unity theme in verses 4-6. Look how often the words "one" and "all" are used. Yes, congregations display diversity – economically, educationally, and culturally – but God's family is one body (see Galatians 3:28-29). We share a common hope – the gift of for-

giveness and eternal life in our "one Lord", Jesus Christ. The "oneness" of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit is the foundation for our Christian unity.

Then how do we achieve this unity? A blend of two perspectives might be helpful. Scripture says to remember those leaders who've taught us God's word; to obey them and submit to their authority (Hebrews 13:7, 17). But all believers "have the mind of Christ" (1 Corinthians 2:16 NKJV). In "The Purpose Driven Church", Rick Warren says,

"Wise leaders understand that people will give mental and verbal assent to what they are told, but they will hold with conviction



Bible Studies for Life  
with Ann Maniscalco

what they discover for themselves."

Some church leaders use their position to decide and dictate goals, programs and ministries with little regard to input from the congregation. This impedes unity and invites apathy. Henry Blackaby, in "Experiencing God", explains his unity-building method. He said God began to move in their Saskatoon church and to express His

will to members. Pastor Blackaby said all members "were given an opportunity and encouraged to share...the entire church became experientially and practically aware of Christ's presence in [their] midst." This team effort resulted in a great work of God.

Reminiscing on his time as a choir member, pastor and cartoonist Joe McKeever discusses the value of unity: "Even the good singers, when called on to do a little solo in rehearsal to help the others...were not that great. And of course, I was the very definition of mediocre. But a funny thing happened. When we all joined our voices together, the result was something magical." He compared this to the local church: "Perhaps we work better and worship better and pray better in concert with brothers and sisters than we do alone."

What part are you playing in this divine "concert"? Could your words of encouragement help a shy or new person "join the choir" (begin using his or her gifts)? Are the lyrics of your "melody line" filled with kindness and grace? Are there any dissonant chords of gossip or unkindness to be put aside? If unity in your church is "off-key", how can you help make it more harmonious?

*Maniscalco is a member of Lemoyne Boulevard Church in Biloxi.*

## GLORIETA

*cont. from p. 1*

positive," said Thom S. Rainer, president and CEO of Nashville-based LifeWay, the Southern Baptist entity that owned and sold Glorieta. "We are particularly gratified the magistrate says the plaintiff's charges of misconduct

by LifeWay, the SBC, and Glorieta 2.0 have no basis in fact, leaving no doubt of our integrity throughout this entire process."

The magistrate gave the Tompkins 14 days to reply to his findings before the recommendations are sent to the federal district judge, who will issue the final ruling.

## CATHY

*cont. from p. 1*

Ronnie Floyd, president of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and senior pastor of Cross Church in northwest Arkansas, said Cathy "lived before the entire world a strong commitment to faith, family and

work. His convolutional leadership not only built a great family, but also one of America's most phenomenal companies."

Frank S. Page, president of the SBC Executive Committee in Nashville, said he was "privileged to meet with Truett Cathy on several occasions. I deeply appreciated his stand on Chris-

tian convictions... His example of steadfastness and commitment to teaching the Word of God is an example to us all."

Truett Cathy is survived by his wife of 65 years, Jeannette McNeil Cathy; sons Dan and Don Cathy; daughter Trudy Cathy White; 19 grandchildren; and 18 great-grandchildren.

# Forced terminations: grief suffered, recovery possible

**NASHVILLE (BP)** — As many as four in ten pastors will be forced to leave a church either by firing or pressured resignation at least once during their ministry careers, according to researchers — but experts in pastoral ministry say many forced terminations can be prevented by wise leadership and very few terminations disqualify a pastor from future ministry.

"Sometimes the best pastors are still going to be in bad situations, and they have to know how to handle it when it comes and still walk with the Lord," Hershael York, a preaching professor at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky., and pastor of Buck Run Church in Frankfort, Ky., told Baptist Press (BP).

"The main thing a guy has to realize is that even when we go through this, it just cannot affect our faith and trust in Christ," he said.

## Prevention

Between 23% and 41% of pastors experience "forced termination" at least once, according to an article published last year in the *Journal of Religion and Health*. Some 452 Southern Baptist pastors and staff members were forcibly terminated in 2012, according to a forced terminations report compiled by state Baptist convention workers who deal with church in conflict.

The most common causes of forced termination among Southern Baptists are "control issues," "pastor's leadership style," and "poor people skills on the part of the pastor," according to the forced terminations report. Among the top 15 causes of forced terminations, only two are related to sin by the pastor — "ethical misconduct" at #8 and "sexual misconduct" at #10.

The main cause of terminations "is almost always personality conflict," York said. Church members "buy on emotion and justify with facts. If a pastor does something that emotionally ticks someone off, what they'll often do is start looking for a justification of why they don't like that guy."

"It may be something fairly trivial and they know that, and so they can't say the trivial thing that upsets them. Then they'll look for the thing they can use."

Developing good people skills is a key facet of establishing a pastor's ministry and guarding against forced termination, York said, noting that ministers must "think on the perceptual level" and determine how they can speak the truth without being unnecessarily offensive.

Among the most self-defeating statements a pastor can make are possessive references like "my church" and "my pulpit," York said. He also cautioned against appearing arrogant and advised pastors to express their love for the church frequently.

"A pastor really needs to tell his church he's grateful to be there, he's thankful to be their pastor, he loves them," York said. "It's just hard for people to dislike somebody who's always being grateful and expressing his affection for them."

Social media and text messages make it easier than ever to stay in touch with church members and express affection, York said, though he cautioned pastors to use social media appropriately.

## Outside help

Even when a pastor has good people skills, occasions may arise when a faction in the church pressures him to resign. In such instances, Jeff Iorg, president of

**"Sometimes the best pastors are still going to be in bad situations, and they have to know how to handle it..."**

— Hershael York

Golden Gate Seminary in southern California, urges the pastor to seek outside help and pursue dialogue rather than conflict.

Baptist associations, state conventions, and independent mediation ministries all offer assistance to pastors and congregations experiencing conflict, Iorg told BP. He added that directors of missions and neighboring pastors can be valuable in helping to resolve conflict.

Sometimes it's hard for pastors to admit that they're wrong, that they need to adjust, or that church members are perhaps right in their perception of problems, Iorg said, adding that an outsider can help pastors see their mistakes.

Iorg also acknowledged "there are people who are so entrenched in their opposition or so angry or so bitter or so difficult that [outside help] won't solve the problem."

Confrontational meetings and votes are almost never the best forum in which to settle disputes between a congregation and pastor, Iorg cautioned.

"Pastors, unless there's a clear doctrinal or moral issue in play, don't need to force division into a church, if at all possible," he said, "so they need to be as patient as possible to bring about a solution that doesn't involve that kind of public confrontation."

## When trouble stirs

Roger S. Oldham, vice president for convention communications and relations with the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee in Nashville, said a 1986 article in *The Quarterly Review*, a publication formerly produced by the Baptist Sunday School Board (now LifeWay Christian Resources) proved helpful to him many times in counseling pastors facing pressure to resign.

The article advised pastors not to be intimidated into a resignation at the first signs of conflict with individual church members.

"Differences of opinion about vision and leadership within a local church are inevitable," Oldham, a longtime pastor before assuming his current role, told BP in written comments. "Though powerful personalities can make it seem the easier way out, uprooting one's family, with all the upheaval that entails, is seldom the best way to deal with those differences."

The article, titled *Forced Termination* and written by Howard V. Pendley III, summarized common arguments made by church members seeking a pastor's

resignation, including the "it's better for your family" argument, and showed how those arguments are often inaccurate.

"It is seldom 'better' for one's family to abruptly sever their friendship networks, move to a new location, and face economic uncertainty merely because a few members may be dissatisfied with the pastor's vision for the church," Oldham said.

Church members who use this line of reasoning "often show their own lack of support within the congregation and hope the pastor will meekly acquiesce to their wishes," he said.

Other arguments discussed in the article include:

■ "A large number of the members have expressed dissatisfaction with your ministry." Is the supposedly dissatisfied group "composed essentially of a fringe group of perennial malcontents; or does it represent the most highly respected, mainstream leadership of the church?" Pendley wrote. "If it is the former, the pastor may be intimidated into resigning; but so long as he maintains the support of the latter group, it's not going to be easy to terminate him forcibly."

■ "Please don't force us to take this to the church. If you do, there will be a terrible church fight, and the congregation will probably split." Pendley noted in response, "Churches do split; sometimes it's better for everyone concerned if they do. But a church rarely splits over a dispute concerning its pastor."

"Unless the minister leaves, taking with him a substantial number of the church members, it's not likely that the church will split. When the smoke clears, however the vote comes out, the composition of the church will usually be almost exactly what it was before the vote was taken."

■ "Pastor, everyone knows that it's easier to find a job when you've got a job. We won't be unreasonable. We'll give you up to thirty days (or ninety days, or six months) to relocate. Your next church doesn't even have to know about all this trouble."

While it is true that finding a job is easier when a person has a job, "it's unrealistic to believe that the pastor's prospective new church won't have investigated extensively enough to know at least something about the circumstances under which he left his former church," Pendley wrote.

Pendley also presented do's and don'ts for pastors under fire, including:

■ Don't panic. "You almost never have to make an instantaneous decision. Don't let your critics force you to do so."

■ Don't be intimidated.

■ Don't let the matter come to the church for a vote unless you're reasonably sure you will be sustained.

■ Do conduct a discreet poll of as many of the significant congregational leaders as you can identify.

## Moving on

If a pastor is forced to resign or is voted out, he is not necessarily disqualified from future ministry unless he leaves because of personal immorality, Iorg said. After a period of emotional and spiritual healing, a terminated minister may serve fruitfully once again.

"There are two classes of mistakes that leaders make," Iorg said. "One is the mistakes that disqualify us from future service but the other one is the mistakes that only disqualify us from our current position, and those happen to many people in life where you simply find for whatever reason are no longer suited for a position and it's time to move on to another one and to learn from the past and be better in the future."

Sylvan Knobloch, director of church health and staff development at the Illinois Baptist State Association, said pastors who have experienced forced termination should tend quickly to their families' emotional health.

"Recognize the emotional trauma and its effects on the family," Knobloch told BP in written comments. "Inquire of your insurance carrier if your health insurance policy includes mental health services. Ask your state convention what services are available to help the family through this time."

"Often we assume termination only affects the pastor. However, in reality the wife loses her friends both inside and outside the church. She may be forced to leave a job or career she finds fulfilling. The children leave their friends through no fault of their own. The children may be bullied in school by former friends from the church..."

It is imperative that churches, pastors, and denominational leaders understand this emotional stress and provide counseling services to the pastor and his family."

Terminated pastors should also participate in retreats hosted by independent ministries and state conventions, Knobloch said, noting that the Illinois state association hosts such a retreat twice a year.

## Taking a break

Knobloch cautioned against hurrying into the next ministry assignment too quickly, a sentiment echoed by Iorg who said pastors in transition should consider getting another job for at least a short time to heal and adjust.

"Do not be in a hurry to find another church," Knobloch said. He advised terminated pastors to ask questions such as, "What are my gifts, talents, experiences and abilities? In what ministry or church has God used my gifts and abilities, allowing me to flourish? Where have I been most successful in ministry? Why?"

Knobloch concluded, "Based on this knowledge you will be able to determine the kind of church environment where you will be able to flourish in the ministry."